

**Written Testimony Supporting  
Proposed House Bill 7285, An Act Concerning Complaints That Allege Misconduct By  
Law Enforcement Agency Personnel**

Senator Doyle, Senator Kissel, Representative Tong, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Ana C. Arboleda, and I am resident of Hartford. I am writing you today in support of Proposed House Bill 7285, which intends to ensure compliance with the provisions of section 7-294bb of the Connecticut general statutes concerning the acceptance, processing, and investigation of a complaint from a member of the public relating to alleged misconduct committed by law enforcement agency personnel.

As a resident of this state and as an employee of one of its most prominent institutions of learning, Trinity College, I am invested in the betterment of Connecticut. While most of my interactions with Connecticut's law enforcement officials have been favorable and even pleasant, I still believe that transparency from our government is a necessity. This is because the community benefits from knowing there is a system of checks and balances that keeps our government accountable. We want that system there, not because we expect it to fail, but because it allows us to maintain faith in our law enforcement in the odd chance that it does. My hope is that this distinguished committee will help my community members and I maintain our faith in a state we love so much.

Proposed House Bill 7285 recognizes that our police complaint process needs improvement; however, it must go further if it intends to accomplish that goal. I support the intention behind the Proposed House Bill 7285, but ask this committee to amend this bill so that we have a truly well-functioning system that we can use. According to a recent survey by the ACLU of Connecticut, this is not currently the case. Some police agencies in the state still make it difficult for members of the public to obtain information regarding complaint forms and processes. This greatly concerns me as in some cases this lack of transparency violates state law. In fact, I was shocked to learn through the report that in my own town of Hartford the complaint process took longer than any other jurisdiction. This is not how we build faith in government.

It is clear that we must amend H.B. 7285 to:

- 1) establish meaningful penalties for law enforcement agencies that do not comply with state complaint acceptance and investigation laws,
- 2) create a standardized complaint form that is compliant with best practices and translated into all commonly-spoken languages in Connecticut, and
- 3) require law enforcement agencies to track complaint data and to annually report specific complaint information to the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.

Amending H.B. 7285 will encourage the community's faith in the police complaint process and ensure that we are holding our law enforcement agencies accountable. Therefore, I urge the members of this committee to amend and support this bill.

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